
TRUSTEE NEWSLETTER

from Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson

"To discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment in order to preserve and enrich life."

-mission of the Missouri Botanical Garden

Upcoming Dates

Orchid Show:

February 1 - March 23, 2014,
Orthwein Floral Display Hall

Trivia Night:

Saturday, March 1, 2014 6 - 10
p.m., Ridgway Visitor Center,
sponsored by the Young
Friends of the Garden;
SOLD OUT

Board of Trustees Meeting:

Thursday, March 13, 2014,
noon, Spink Pavilion



The winter weather this year has proved challenging for everyone in St. Louis, and the Garden is no exception. I am extremely grateful to the many Garden employees who were on site during the worst of the weather. The Horticulture staff did a terrific job removing the significant accumulation of snow while working in subzero temperatures and windy conditions. The Security and General Services staff made sure our building systems were operating properly during the frigid temperatures. Despite the fact that Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow, I am still hoping for (but not necessarily expecting) an early spring.

I am happy to report that 2013 was an outstanding year of achievement for the Garden. We welcomed almost one million visitors including those who visited the Butterfly House and Shaw Nature Reserve. Our education program remains strong and 98,000 children and adults participated in classes. We also achieved a balanced budget.

Garden Glow Images



A key component to a successful 2013 was Garden Glow. Our first foray into holding a holiday season light display, despite some challenging temperatures and precipitation, was extremely well received. Glow volunteers maintained a pleasant and positive attitude in weather conditions no one could have predicted. More than 300 Glow volunteers did not let bad weather and frigid temperatures deter them from their assignments and I am deeply grateful to all our volunteers. I also want to express my sincere appreciation to all the staff who worked so hard which contributed to the success of Garden Glow this first year. We measured actual visitor attendance at 93,800, or just over 2,900 per Glow evening on average. Close to 60,000 Glow attendees also toured Tower Grove House which greatly enriched their experience of the visit to the Garden. A bit of trivia, the Garden Gate Shop sold 3,105 pairs of Glow Gloves. Monthly attendance for December 2013 was up 116% over the previous year.

At the end of the year, after an extensive search, we welcomed Dr. James Miller to the position of Senior Vice President, Science and Conservation. Jim previously worked at the Garden for more than 20 years before departing in 2007 to serve as Dean and Vice President for Science at The New York Botanical Garden. Since his arrival, Jim has been meeting with everyone in the Science and Conservation program and has found these one-on-one meetings to be very helpful in setting future priorities. I also want to say many thanks to Bob Magill who has so ably served as Senior Vice President, Science and Conservation for the past eighteen years.

I would like to congratulate, Garden Curator Dr. George Yatskievych who has received a 2014 Outstanding Scientist Award from the Academy of Science- St. Louis. George will receive the Trustees award at an awards ceremony on April 9th. He is being recognized for his outstanding contributions for promoting the understanding and appreciation of science. Last year, under Dr. Yatskievych's leadership, the Garden completed the publication of the *Flora of Missouri*, a comprehensive guide to the state's flora.

Congratulations are also in order to the Garden's Jean Ponzi who recently received the Kay and Leo Drey Environmental Stewardship Award. With more than 25 years of experience in environmental education, Jean is an expert in energy efficiency, recycling, native plant landscaping, water conservation, and many other green living practices.

As we move into 2014, an important task ahead of us will be to "renew and extend" our current Strategic Plan through 2020. The

Senior Management team has just begun the planning process. This important task cannot be done in a vacuum and we will be reaching out to many of you for your input.

The Orchid Show opened February 1st and is especially welcome at this time of year. The show celebrates the orchids of South America in a design setting inspired by the great Brazilian landscape architect, Roberto Burle Marx. It is a once-a-year opportunity to see a rotating display of the hundreds of orchids from the Garden's expansive permanent collection. Taking time to stroll through this show is the perfect winter escape.

The Garden Participates in Two International Conferences

Along with several other MBG staff members, I was pleased to represent the Garden at two international meetings late last fall. I attended The Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Dunedin, New Zealand along with staff including Andrew Wyatt, VP of Horticulture and Chuck Miller, VP of IT and Chief Information Officer. The Congress is organized every three years by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) which is a worldwide networking organization linking botanic gardens in the world's largest plant conservation network, providing vision and leadership for botanic gardens around the world. The congress provides a unique opportunity for the community to come together to share ideas and experiences and to develop priorities and strategies for the future.

I was honored to be asked to give the last plenary address to wrap up the Congress program and spoke of the re-invention of botanic gardens over the last 30 years. Botanic gardens today play a deep educational role and there is an increasing need for them to address biodiversity and its loss. Botanic gardens are increasingly looking 'beyond the garden walls' and engaging with new audiences. They are responding to and creating horticultural change and are at the forefront of botanical science and innovation. Botanic gardens also play a key role in implementing the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) to which MBG is totally committed and involved in helping to accomplish all of its 16 targets by 2020 (its first target is to have a World Flora online by 2020).

In my plenary address, I outlined six grand challenges that lay ahead for botanic gardens including MBG:

- Linking plant conservation & environmental protection to world priorities
- Being more focused in conservation efforts and raising our game in conserving threatened plants in ex situ conservation
- Working together more effectively
- Providing increasingly effective leadership in sustainability and environmental education
- Pushing the boundaries in plant science –the World Flora Online, for example
- Sustaining botanic gardens so they can build on past achievements

The Council of the World Flora Online (WFO) met in November at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Scotland. The meeting covered topics such as flora project checklists, initial proof of concept and timetable going forward. Since the Memorandum of Understanding opened for signing in January, 2013, 20 organizations have joined the Council and a number of other institutions have expressed their intent to sign.

CCSD Receives \$5 Million from the Bellwether Foundation

The Garden's Center for Conservation and Sustainable Development (CCSD) has received a charitable gift and pledge of \$5,000,000 from The Bellwether Foundation to enhance and further develop CCSD's work. The gift, made as endowment to CCSD, is intended to support the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan developed by CCSD to fulfill its strategic goals through the year 2020. The gift and pledge reflect The Bellwether Foundation's longstanding commitment to the Garden and to the success and development of CCSD, and its work in conservation. The initial \$3,000,000 of funding will be paid over three years (2013-2015), and payment of the remaining \$2,000,000 is contingent upon the Garden's raising matching funds from third parties by

October 2017 to augment the endowment for CCSD. Through this contingent pledge Bellwether desires to stimulate and encourage others to donate to and enhance the endowment of CCSD and hopes to enable the Garden to raise at least \$2,000,000 of other contributions for the Garden's endowment.



Two Recent Projects at the Shaw Nature Reserve

The Sense of Wonder Woodland is a project that is under way at Shaw Nature Reserve (SNR) thanks to a generous donation from the Dr. Thomas Ott family in memory of Mary Ott. It links well with the Robert J. Trulaske, Jr. Family Foundation's support of the Pinetum restoration project. This project area is the "front door" of Shaw Nature Reserve; it is the first thing visitors see and experience. The area will not only be enhanced ecologically, but it will also be managed in a way that provides comfortable, accessible and enjoyable opportunities for public interaction.

In 2008, the Nature Explore Classroom (NEC) was opened at SNR in an effort to attract families with young children, giving them an inviting and safe area to engage in unstructured play. The Mary Ott Sense of Wonder Woodland Adventure Trail will expand this wonderful "play" area to encompass the wooded trail system leading from the NEC to Pinetum Lake, providing additional opportunities to connect young children to the natural world.

Garden Receives Support for Early Childhood Education Programs

Recent support from PNC Bank for Grow Up Great and from Boeing for Sprouting Science in St. Louis: Digging Deep with Urban Youth will enable the Garden's work in early childhood education to grow in scope and impact. Grow Up Great will focus on Head Start students and teachers in St. Louis. Sprouting Science in St. Louis in partnership with the St. Louis Public School District will help to cultivate a child's interest in plants and nature in their neighborhoods and through activities in various classes at the Garden, school-based outreach programming and family engagement events throughout the year.

Institutional Advancement Has a Productive Year

Annual contributed income for 2013 exceeded the goal for the year, with nearly \$7 million raised, an increase of 8 percent from the previous year. In addition, the Garden received bequests of more than \$1.1 million. Sponsorships totaling \$175,000 were secured for Garden Glow, and more than 1,200 memberships were sold during the run of the exhibit.



The Garden for the World campaign has raised more than \$73 million, and we are very grateful that nearly all Trustees have made commitments. Co-chairs Lelia Farr and Nick Reding are working to secure commitments from those remaining trustees. The next phase of solicitation begins in February, and planning is under way for a public announcement of the campaign later in 2014. Most immediately, gifts to the Garden for the World campaign are making possible renovations to the Japanese Garden, Kemper Center, the historic wall and several infrastructure repairs as well as the restoration and renovation of the Museum Building. It will also enable us to invest in much needed new computers and a new phone system and to establish a new nursery where the Garden will be able to raise hardy plants for its collections.

Attendance at member events continues to grow, with many events selling out. In 2014, new activities will be tested to engage key audiences and cultivate this growing involvement. With the assistance of the Members' Board, member events continue to be high quality activities with very low costs.

The Garden's Young Friends program experienced great success in 2013, with sold-out events and increased fundraising results. Beginning in 2014, proceeds from Young Friends events will support the Children's Garden.

Butterfly House Reopens After January Closing

The Butterfly House was closed during the month of January for annual maintenance and renovations. Maintenance in the Conservatory included trimming, pruning, cutting, and adding new plants. The Exhibit Hall has a new look, with some remodeled exhibits and the addition of new ones. The Butterfly House's youngest visitors will especially appreciate new exhibits like "Exploration Station" and "Caterpillar Corner." These new exhibits will be interactive, featuring insect specimens, a Costa Rican mini marketplace, bird watching stations, and more. The popular Hot! Hot! Hot! for children ages 3 – 8 with their families took place on February 8, 2014.



2014 Green Homes Festival Moves to June

The 2014 Green Homes Festival will be held on Saturday, June 7th. To further highlight the connection between green living and the Garden's mission, festival events will be centered in and around the Kemper Center for Home Gardening. Many of the Kemper Center's existing displays already provide wonderful demonstrations of sustainable landscaping strategies. Bringing in exhibits and demonstrations related to other sustainable life style choices such as local foods, green building, renewable energy, and alternative transportation will provide visitors of all ages, fun and interactive ways to discover very practical ways to live green. For more information, go to www.mobot.org/greenhomesfest.